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ABSTRACT

Intended for secondary teachers of English, this bulletin contains teaching techniques and instructional materials for practicing classroom teachers. Contents include "The Real Theme of Aiken's 'Impulse,'" which suggests that the theme of Aiken's short story is that actions have consequences; "Robinson's 'Richard Cory,'" which examines the theme of suicide; "On Teaching Shakespeare: An ERIC/RCS Review," which presents instructional materials for teaching Shakespeare; "Two Tragedies: 'Julius Caesar' and 'Jesus Christ Superstar,'" which analyzes the similarities between their characters, themes, plot structures, and dramatic devices; "War and Patriotism, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: Some Literature and Short Films on that Theme"; and "The Independent Reading of Young Adults," which presents the findings of a survey of the reading habits of adolescents. (RB)

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The Real Theme of Aiken's "Impulse"

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"Why'd you do that?"
"I dunno."
"How could you buy chocolate-covered ants for dessert?"
"I saw it on the shelf and grabbed it on impulse."

Budget makers warn against impulse buying, but the fact of impulse, or of impulsive behavior, is well known in marketing, and even to students. Asking a class to give some examples of things they have done impulsively always produces a lively interchange which demonstrates the universality of impulsive action.

At first glance, the title of Aiken's short story "Impulse"[1] seems to give everything away. A hasty reading of the story may give a student the impression that it only tells about a man who suffers because of an impulsive action. That reading is correct, as far as it goes. A closer reading, however, shows that such an interpretation of the theme does not go far enough. It fails to recognize a larger theme, a theme that is more universal than the obvious one about suffering as a result of impulsive action.

The first sentence gives a clue to Michael's character, to be inferred from the choice of two adjectives "pallid" and "asymmetrical." (15) The lack of color and symmetry should suggest some defect in Michael. Furthermore, in the first two paragraphs, the two references to the bridge game as a means of "escape" should suggest a certain instability of character, an unwillingness to face reality without frequent "escapes." His reference to Hur-

[1] All references and quotations are taken from Conrad Aiken's "Impulse" as it appears in *Short Story Masterpieces*, edited by Warren and Erskine (New York: Dell, 1954), Dell Laurel Edition 7864. Numbers in parentheses refer to pages in that edition.

witz and Bryant and Smith as "cheap fellows — mere pick-up acquaintances" (15) shows that he is a selfish man willing to use others for his own gratification. Adding to these references the details about jumping (moving) to avoid the unpaid bills, his complaint about "fate" and "bad luck" hounding him, and his reluctance to face Dora openly, the reader can clearly see that Michael is an unreliable, evasive man who rationalizes his unsatisfactory life.

Such a character would surely be subject to impulsive action, and we may even infer that he has indeed been impulsive in the past. Without this supposition about his character, the plot demands too much of the reader to accept the theft of the razor as the first impulsive act of Michael's life.

When the talk at the bridge game turned to various kinds of impulses,

> Michael was astonished... He had often felt... these impulses. (17) Here was everyone wanting to steal... Why not be a Columbus of the moral world and really do it? (18)

The revelation that he had stolen a conch shell when he was ten supports the earlier inference about his having acted impulsively before.

At this point, a discussion about the nature of impulse would be in order. However such a discussion is carried out, it should be fairly clearly established that impulse refers to an action that is unpremeditated. Michael's entry into the drugstore then cannot be called an impulse, especially when we are told,

> And at once he was seized with a conviction that his real reason for entering the drugstore was not to get a hot chocolate — not at all! He was going to steal something. He was going to put the impulse to the test, and see whether (one) he could manage it with sufficient skill, and (two) whether theft gave him any real satisfaction. (18-19)

This information, coupled with the fact that Michael does not steal the first object he comes upon but rather chooses quite deliberately, shows that Michael's "test," indeed his whole "impulse," is a rationalization, a rationalization quite consistent with the character already presented.

Caught by the store detective, Michael's first reaction was to deny the action; then he tried to lie about the act, claiming it was a "joke," a "bet with some friends." The theft had promoted "mere pick-up acquaintances" to "friends." On the way to the police station, Michael's attempts to play on the detective's sympathy or to intimidate the detective with his smattering of legal jargon proved futile. At the station, the denial by Hurwitz and

Bryant infuriated him; the "cool voice" of his wife frightened him. These incidents display a certain amount of suffering as a result of an impulsive act; but these results also suggest the larger theme already alluded to.

Moreover, Dora's visit to him in jail is particularly unsettling. Her offer to get him a lawyer is tempered by the fact that she won't touch her own savings "because the children and [she] may need them" (25). Recalling all the intimate details of their life together, Michael comes to an insight about their relationship, but he fails to grasp the significance of that insight. He admits that he "knew all these things, which nobody else knew, and nevertheless, now, they amounted to nothing" (25). He has not perceived the important distinction between *knowing about* a person and *understanding* a person.

His subsequent conviction and Dora's letter announcing that she is divorcing him overwhelm him and thus further diminish any insight he might have gained. True to his character, he pities himself, rationalizing this sad state of affairs:

> Of course. This was what life was. It was just as meaningless and ridiculous as this; a monstrous joke; a huge injustice. You couldn't trust anybody, not even your wife, not even your best friends. You went on a little lark, and they sent you to prison for it, and your friends lied about you, and your wife left you ... (27).

Not comprehending the real situation, he fantasizes a future where "he would show them."

If the story were to end here, the theme might indeed be the simple one of a man's suffering as a result of impulsive action. But Aiken includes one final paragraph which carries the theme beyond the prosaic one of impulse.

As we review the details of the last paragraph, we see that Aiken gives us a glimpse of Michael's past life, a life which to Michael "seemed to be composed of such trival and infinitely charming episodes." He sees that his life "had all come foolishly to an end" (28). But he fails to recognize *why* his life is so shattered. He fails to realize that *deeds have consequences*. His lack of perception, his failure to understand, does not permit him to recognize or accept this fact or the corollary that the consequences of any given deed may not be proportionate to the deed. There is no way for him to understand how all the seemingly trivial incidents of his life really do have consequences, some of which may have altered his life drastically.

Macbeth's murder of the king demands a retribution of equal importance. But the theft of so trivial an item as a razor utterly

ruins Michael's life. Marlow says in *Lord Jim*, "... There are things — they look small enough sometimes too — by which some of us are totally and completely undone." A trip to Niagara Falls, a Fourth of July on a boat, an examination at college, a lost stamp collection, a stolen conch shell — all are "trivial" actions whose consequences cannot be determined. Yet actions *do* have consequences, and it is this theme that Aiken offers as the real theme of "Impulse."

Edwin Arlington Robinson's "Richard Cory"

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"Richard Cory" is a stock anthology piece which Louis O. Coxe calls a "trick" poem, suggesting that it "would need less defense if it could be retired from all anthologies for a few seasons."[1] It is as well-known as any of Robinson's poems, and Cory himself continues to be one of the classic enigmas of Robinson's canon, indeed of the rather closed canon of poetry anthologies. Such being the case, it is perhaps not inappropriate to present yet another reading of the poem.

The signal fact of Cory's history, his suicide, and the moral which Robinson attaches to it, haunts the reader long after he has forgotten the particulars of the story of the poem, just as it must have haunted Cory's fellow townspeople after his suicide. Indeed, as Mark Strand has pointed out, "If the poem has a major weakness it is that the moral looms larger and larger in retrospect and some of its elegance is sacrificed."[2]

In many ways "Richard Cory" is an almost perfect poem. The obsessive, almost monotonous regularity of the iambic pentameter moves through the lines, performing the graceful turns of rhyme with all the ease and glitter typified by Cory himself — at least as

[1] Louis O. Coxe, *Edwin Arlington Robinson: The Life of Poetry* (New York: Pegasus, 1969), pp. 84, 53.

[2] Mark Strand, "Richard Cory," in Oscar Williams, ed., *Master Poems of the English Language* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1967), p. 910.

he is seen by the townspeople, who are, with Cory, the dual focuses of the poem. The disparity between the townspeople and Cory is subtly suggested by the ten monosyllables of line twelve which, as they plod across the page, represent the awkward gait of the common people who attempt to mimic the rhythm of Cory's perambulations. The contrast is illustrative of the difference between the easy manner of a man who "glittered when he walked" and the townspeople's futile attempts to mimic his manner and bearing, which the rather pedestrian monosyllabic line suggests. The townspeople succeed in keeping the rhythm but fail to accomplish anything like Cory's "glitter." Appropriately enough, the preceding eleventh line is the only run-on line in the poem and thus emphasizes the attempted carry-over of Cory's glitter in the townspeople's parody of it.

Further, there are other obvious contrasts between Cory and the townspeople. Cory is active, the townspeople passive; Cory is rich, the townspeople poor; Cory apparently does not work, nor need to, while the townspeople must labor for their meager rewards. In short, as Charles Burkhart has pointed out, "Cory is made a king, an isolated and remote figure in contrast to the people of the town: he is 'imperially slim,' 'crown' is connotative in 'from sole to crown,' he 'glittered when he walked,' he is even 'richer than a king.' "[3]

Complementing these contrasts between Cory and the townspeople, Robinson carefully builds up the contrasts between the light and dark imagery as the poem progresses. Cory is "quietly arrayed" and "he glittered when he walked" while the townspeople live out their lives in the dark, spending their time in the reflected glow of Cory's presence, waiting "for the light." This light and dark imagery is fused in the penultimate line of the poem in the phrase "one calm summer night." Here Robinson suggests that Cory, the man favored by the light, one of the "children of light" and thus symbolically blessed, is as much trapped by an inner darkness as are the townspeople, the "children of darkness," who literally live in the dark night which they, as well, symbolically inhabit.[4] This final twist of irony, that Cory should commit suicide on a "calm summer night" is, symbolically speaking, as surprising as is the fact that he should, from townspeople's point of view, commit suicide at all.

[3] Charles Burkhart, "Richard Cory," *The Explicator*, XIX (November 1960), Item 9.

[4] "Richard Cory" was, appropriately enough, included in Robinson's 1897 volume, *The Children of the Night*.

But the key to the poem is clearly Cory's suicide. If it is the case, as Strand says, that "the poem's power depends, in large part, on what is not known about Richard Cory," since "the poem is as much about the townspeople who worship him as it is about Richard Cory himself,"[5] equally clearly we must examine closely the single specific detail we *do* know about Cory, that "one calm summer night" he "went home and put a bullet through his head."

It would seem that the *dis-ease* which Cory, due to his special place in the town, felt, as well as his possible torment over his own status in the community, in contrast to the plight of his fellow townspeople, has *diseased* his mind. Certainly, it would be difficult for a man of conscience and personal refinement to be unaware of the blatant contrast between himself and those around him. That such a fact may well have worked on Cory's mind lends believability to the method of his suicide. By putting "a bullet through his head" Cory at once effects not only his own death, but symbolically and most specifically dispenses with the seat of his guilt, his mental commiseration over the plight of his fellows. The fact that he kills himself, rather than attempting to alleviate some of the misery and suffering around him, ironically implies the chill of his personality, which has been suggested throughout the poem by the "glitter" which he gives off. The cliché behind the picture of Cory — all that glitters is not gold[6] — suggests Cory's own lack of heart; this in spite of the fact that the impression he makes on the townspeople is specifically identified with the heart through the phrase "but still he fluttered pulses." The implication is that Cory effects an emotional, as opposed to an intellectual, response in the townspeople.[7]

In short then, if Cory had, as yet another cliché has it, only had a heart, he might well have been able to overcome what remains only ironically the "rich core" of his being. In "Richard Cory" Robinson graphically suggests the sickness of a culture which could allow a man of Cory's potential to take his life before he would permit himself to give his heart. As much as anything the poem is a classic example of the mental suicide so many find it so easy to accomplish.

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[5] Strand, "Richard Cory," p. 909.

[6] Burkhart suggests several other clichés implicit in the poem — "appearances are deceiving," "the grass is always greener. . . ."

[7] In the earlier phrase "from sole to crown" the word "sole" may well be an ironic pun on "soul," suggesting that Cory is all surface, that he has the exterior trappings of a "soul" but in reality has nothing any closer to the reality than a "sole."

On Teaching Shakespeare: An ERIC/RCS Review

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Shakespeare's plays are one of the few relatively stable elements in the literature component of English programs. While other books and other authors make their brief debut in the English curriculum and then pass on into the darkness, the study of "the immortal Shakespeare," the man "not of an age, but for all time," has continued largely unaffected by the passing of the years.

The winds of change are finally being felt, however, primarily in the development of new methods for approaching the plays. An indication of the direction in which the wind is blowing can be seen from an examination of some selected documents from the ERIC system.

One of the more written-about methods of interesting students in Shakespeare is through the use of electronic media and visual aids. Gerald Camp's "Shakespeare Lives!" (*Media & Methods*, October 1968) suggests several films of Shakespeare's plays which can be used to both enlighten and entertain today's students. Tom Andrews and Jan Austell's "Who Are These People?" (*Media & Methods*, December 1968; ED 026 386, 5 pp.) advocates the use of Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* to prepare students for the imaginative reading of that play. Other suggestions for the visual enhancement of Shakespeare classes may be found in Chris Webb's "Shakespeare in the Classroom" (*Visual Education*, March 1972). A large number of audio-visual aids to teaching Shakespeare — records, filmstrips, and literary maps — are also available through the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

Two older works dealing with audio-visual aids may still be quite valuable to English teachers. They are the Educational Film Library Association's *Audio Visual Guide to Shakespeare* (1962, 8 pp.) and Richard Albert's more recent "Annotated Guide to Audio-Visual Materials for Teaching Shakespeare" (*English Journal*, November 1965; ED 038 383, 12 pp.). The EFLA's publication lists several films, filmstrips, records, and tape recordings which are useful for the study of Shakespeare. Albert's guide is a longer annotated list, including reference works as well as

films, filmstrips, and recordings appropriate for classroom use. It is available from NCTE (Stock No. 08100, 10/$2.00).

Two other documents stress an approach to Shakespeare's plays through characterization. R. W. Reising's "Keeping Shakespeare Alive and Well in the Seventies" (ED 058 204, 2 pp.) in the fall 1971 issue of *English in Texas,* suggests the use of pictures of contemporary persons in conjunction with the study of individual plays as a means of keeping the emphasis in Shakespeare study on people. *Shakespeare and the Students* (Schocken Books, Inc., 1970, 206 pp.) by D. J. Enright, studies *King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, Macbeth,* and *The Winter's Tale* as "plays about people." Both content and tone of voice are discussed in Enright's analysis of the characters as real people placed in plausible situations.

Many teachers are also involved in increasing their students' appreciation of Shakespeare by directly involving them in the performance of one or more Shakespearean plays. Helpful in this regard is *The Theatre's Different Demands: An Approach to the Classroom Teaching of Plays* (1970, ED 046 934, 37 pp.). This teacher's guide by Mary Hunter Wolf and Victor Miller is designed to introduce high school students to acting in order to provide them with an understanding of the uniqueness of dramatic literature, particularly Shakespearean drama. Two products of CEMREL, Inc., *An Introduction to Theatre: Reading a Play, Volume 1* (revised edition, 1968) and *Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar": The Initial Classroom Presentation, An Introduction to Theatre, Volume 2* (revised edition, 1969), are also quite useful, though only the second volume is available through ERIC (ED 035 657, 165 pp.). Written by James Hoetker and Alan Englesman, they contain detailed lesson plans, addressed to the high school English teacher inexperienced in drama and designed to enable him to successfully conduct dramatic activities that lead to an understanding and appreciation of printed plays. (Literature units based on the later documents have been commercially published by Scholastic Books Services.)

A teaching technique based on the comic elements in Shakespeare's plays is advocated in Norman Sanders' *William Shakespeare: Comedian* (1965, ED 030 637, 12 pp.), an English Association of Ohio monograph, and Michael Lasser's "Shakespeare: Finding and Teaching the Comic Vision" (ED 038 396, 14 pp.), an article from the December 1969 issue of the *English Record.* Sanders concentrates on the double view of life which Shakespeare present in all his plays. Lasser is concerned with comedy as a way

for students to discover relevance in Shakespeare, as "an escape, not from truth but from despair."

More general discussions of successful methods of teaching Shakespeare are contained in a number of ERIC and NCTE documents. ***Shakespeare in School and College*** (1964, NCTE Stock No. 38104, 62 pp.) contains essays on the teaching of Shakespeare and Shakespeare in the high school classroom. ***Shakespeare*** (1964, NCTE Stock No. 38006, 36 pp.) is a reprint of a 1964 issue of the ***Oklahoma English Bulletin*** which dealt with the responsibility of the Shakespeare teacher, resources for teaching *Macbeth*, and other topics. A twelve-week phase-elective Shakespeare course is described in ***Phase-Elective English: An Experimental Program for Grades Eleven and Twelve*** (1969, ED 037 458, 170 pp.), issued by the Jefferson County Board of Education of Louisville, Kentucky. For each of the twenty-six phase-elective courses it describes, this document provides literary objectives, an outline of content, a week-by-week description of activities, suggested teaching approaches, a list of supplementary materials, and a bibliography. An extensive guide to the teaching of Shakespeare in high school is available from the Board of Education of the City of New York (Publications Sales Office, 110 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, $4.00). Entitled ***Teaching Shakespeare: Resource Units in Language Arts for Secondary Schools*** (1970, 241 pp.), the guide suggests several techniques — student dramatization, choral reading, reading with a colleague, and the use of filmstrips — which may help to advance the learning process.

The documents discussed above are but a few of those in the ERIC system which deal with teaching Shakespeare in the secondary school and college. More may be found by scanning the pages of the monthly issues of the ***Current Index to Journals in Education*** (CIJE) and ***Research in Education*** (RIE). You may purchase complete copies of the ERIC documents mentioned in this article in either microfiche (MF) or hardcopy (HC) from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), P.O. Drawer O, Bethesda, Maryland 20014. Orders must specify quantity, ED number, and kind of reproduction desired, MF or HC. MF costs 65¢ per document; HC costs $3.29 per 100 pages.

Two Tragedies: *Julius Caesar* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*

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Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* seemed to come alive to both myself and my students this year. Modern society's reinterpretation of the crucifixion has given Brutus and Julius new life.

When I was listening to *Jesus Christ Superstar*, I noticed how neatly Judas fit into the pattern of an Elizabethan tragic hero. The only shift from the pattern was Judas's social position. In this sense Judas fits more into the mold of the modern tragic hero — the common man. Judas, however, does have a tragic flaw; he makes an erroneous judgment. His pride is also too great, his singleness of purpose too intense for him to see around his error. His reaction to Christ is similar to Othello's when the Moor bends to seemingly overwhelming evidence against Desdemona.

Since I was searching for material to supplement a sophomore literature course and since I was anxious to wedge *Superstar* into the semester, I searched for both justification and relevance. I remembered that in the sophomore literature textbook there was a Shakespearean play — *Julius Caesar*. What immediately struck me in my never-ending search to relate the two works was that Christ and Caesar could have used the same monogrammed hand towels. I looked for other name similarities, merely playing word games with myself. I found that Brutus and Judas rhymed.

Finally, more important points began to fall into place. Not only are Brutus and Judas the tragic heroes of their respective plays, but also, as I will explain later, each is caught in a similar dilemma, each reacts the same way to his dilemma, and each dies in a similar fashion. Julius Caesar and Jesus Christ also have similar roles in their respective plays. Both act as catalysts in bringing out the tragic natures of Brutus and Judas.

There exists one inescapable character difference between Caesar and Christ. Caesar ignores portents which reveal future events — the soothsayer, Calpurnia's dreams, and Artemidorus's letter which, although never received, is inches away before Caesar decides to turn to other matters first. Christ, on the other hand,

holds knowledge of the future and chooses not to escape — for family reasons.

Each man, however, is perceived similarly because of what he represents. Because the common people worship Caesar and want him to become a more powerful ruler, a number of senators become envious and jealous. Their reactions can be better described as a fear of losing power. With a king ruling Rome, the senators would become obsolete and, thus, less glamorous. One senator, Brutus, fears the kingship for nationalistic reasons. He is not sure whether one man should have so much power. Alone, after joining the conspiracy, Brutus talks himself into action:

> It must be by his death; and for my part,
> I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
> But for the general. He would be crowned.[1]

Brutus reassures himself that Caesar's death would benefit the country, not necessarily himself; for this reason he joins the conspiracy.

Envy, jealousy, and nationalism are also the three stressed reactions to Christ. Caiaphas, the high priests, and Herod are concerned about Christ's rising popularity among the masses. Caiaphas notes:

> I see bad things arising — the crowd crown him king
> Which the Romans would ban.
> I see blood and destruction, our elimination because of one man
> Blood and destruction because of one man.[2]

Their position is one of comfort and glamour. Only one man, Judas, is unselfishly concerned. Judas is afraid that Christ will damage the love cult's success by claiming himself King of the Jews and the son of God:

> Listen Jesus do you care for your race?
> Don't you see we must keep in our place?
> We are occupied — have you forgotten how put down we are?
> I am frightened by the crowd
> For we are getting much too loud
> And they'll crush us if we go too far.

Because Judas himself does not believe Christ's claims, he feels that the Romans will prove him a liar and, thus, doom the Jewish people to a life of servitude. Judas reacts, like Brutus, for the good of the people.

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[1] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, ed. Maynard Mack and Robert W. Boynton (New York: Hayden Book Company, 1973), II, i, 10-12.

[2] Tim Rice, lyrics, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (London: Leeds Music, 1969-70).

In the dramatic sense, then, both Christ and Caesar act as catalysts in order to bring out the tragic nature of both Brutus and Judas. Brutus and Judas are best friends with the men they betray. Both betray their friends for noble purposes — but for purposes instilled in them through trickery. Cassius, in order to pave the way for the overthrow of the government, poisons Brutus's mind by working on the doubts within Brutus concerning Caesar's increased power as emperor. Brutus's inability to see through Cassius's mask is the first of two errors in judgment that eventually leads him to his death. The second error in judgment is his doubting of Caesar's sincerity as ruler. Brutus's motivation, then, is purely nationalistic. Judas also makes two errors in judgment. Like Brutus, Judas cannot see into Caiaphas's and the other priests' motivation for wanting Christ out of the way. Like the senators, the priests fear that Christ's gain of glory will weaken their own social and economic position. And like the senators, they work on both Judas's doubts of Christ's motivation and his sincerity toward the religious movement of love and brotherhood.

Not only do the events leading up to each man's betrayal run on parallel lines in bringing out the tragic nature and the similarities of their characters; but this pattern continues following the betrayal. In *Julius Caesar* Brutus later experiences feelings of guilt brought on by the mystical experience of seeing Caesar's ghost and also by past events becoming clearer in his own mind. The realization of his mistake drives him to suicide; he is not able to accept the responsibility for his previous actions. In Act V his realization is shown in his final words, "Caesar now be still. I killed not thee with half so good a will" (V, v, 56-57). As Brutus dies, he acknowledges his lack of insight and his failure to read earlier divine warnings.

Although the events leading up to Judas's realization are not shown, a mystical revelation in Judas's suicide soliloquy can be detected:

Christ I know you can't hear me
But I only did what you wanted me to
Christ! I'd sell out the whole nation
For I have been saddled with the murder of you.
. . . . . .
. . . My God, I am sick, I've been used
And you knew all the time
God! I'll never ever know why you chose me for your crime
For your foul, bloody crime.

Here, Judas, like Brutus, is unable to cope with the realization of his crime. Judas's suicide seems more tragic, however, since he had no control over his actions during the betrayal. Although *Superstar* works with a betrayal plot which had been predestined, I find it interesting that characters react so similarly in each play. Let me also add that although Judas's betrayal was predestined, his suicide was not. Thus, one might find better congruency between plays following the predestined betrayal in *Superstar*.

Other character and structural similarities exist. First, the use of the mystical experience can be found in both plays. In *Caesar*, both Calpurnia and Brutus have portentous dreams; in *Superstar*, Pilate experiences a portentous dream. All three cannot quite figure out the meanings of their dreams, though obvious to the reader. Secondly, the mystical messenger who goes unheeded can also be found in both plays. Christ warns Peter and Judas of their betrayal, but each one finds no meaning in his words. A soothsayer tries to warn Caesar of upcoming events, but Caesar chooses not to listen. Thirdly, the character of the antagonists and the mobs in each play is also similar. Cassius and Caiaphas play similar roles and are motivated by similar reasons. Because each is fearful of his social and political position, each tries to poison the mind of the intended victim's friend. The mob in each play shows similar personalities. Each is easily swayed by rhetoric. Although, at first, each mob is behind the leader (Christ and Caesar), each later (and quickly) changes sides. The best example of the mob's lack of character can be found during the scene when Mark Antony speaks to the mob over the corpse of Caesar. Preceding Mark Antony's speech, the crowd is shown to be firmly behind Brutus (after being firmly behind Caesar prior to the assassination): "Live, Brutus, live, live. . . . Give him [Brutus] a statue with his ancestors" (III, ii, 48, 50). Moments later, Antony takes the crowd by the tail and sways them to his side. The crowd responds to Brutus and company, "They were traitors. Honourable men!" . . . "They were villains, murderers" (III, ii, 160, 162). Similarly, in *Superstar* the mob changes its position from sincerely following Christ to demanding his death. The mob at first chants:

Christ you know I love you
Did you see I waved?
I believe in you and God
So tell me that I'm saved.

From this chant of devotion, the mob changes its tune and its lyrics: "We have no king but Caesar; Crucify him!"

Thus, *Jesus Christ Superstar* appears to fit into the dramatic tradition of tragedy. Not only are there similarities between characters, theme, and plot structure, but there are also similarities in dramatic devices. As I mentioned in my opening statement, *Superstar* brought new life to *Julius Caesar* for both my students and myself.

War and Patriotism, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow:

Some Literature and Short Films on That Theme

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War and the nature of patriotism are elements common to a large body of literature often studied in the English class. Indeed, students often encounter thematic units on "War" or "War As Man's Major Crisis" or "War As a Determiner of Man's Values and Hopes" or "War and Peace," and semester-long electives on some aspect of war literature are becoming more common.

We believe that war and antiwar literature deserve a place in the English classroom, if for no other reason than its omnipresent reality for every boy. We believe that the English classroom is a legitimate place to discuss questions like the following: Is dissent a necessary part of the American way of life? What is the nature of patriotism? To whom does man owe his primary loyalty, himself or his country? In what way has man changed in his attitudes toward war, from the romantic view of the Middle Ages to the more realistic and antagonistic view of much of the contemporary world? What did Samuel Johnson mean when he said, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel"?

War and antiwar literature is already part of the reading scene of many students. Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl*, Boulle's *The Bridge over the River Kwai*, and Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* have been

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used so widely in English classrooms that they have become virtual standards. While we have no desire to replace any of these titles, we would like to recommend titles of other novels and short works that might be worth considering in any study of war or antiwar themes. We would also like to append a list of short films which might be used in conjunction with a thematic unit or elective. After each short film, we list some information and a plot summary, since the films are less likely to be known than the literature. All the titles are meant to be representative and suggestive, rather than complete listings.

Novels: Hentoff's *I'm Really Dragged But Nothing Gets Me Down,* Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun,* Grass' *The Tin Drum,* March's *Company K,* Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago,* Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five,* Uris's *Exodus,* Forman's *My Enemy, His Brother,* Tunis's *His Enemy, His Friend* and *Silence over Dunkerque,* Frank's *Alas, Babylon,* Cobb's *Paths of Glory,* Fast's *April Morning,* Heller's *Catch-22,* and Killens' *And Then We Heard the Thunder.*

Short Works: Hemingway's "Old Man at the Bridge," Faulkner's "Two Soldiers," Ellison's "Flying Home," Bierce's "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" and "A Horseman in the Sky," Crane's "An Episode of War" and "The Upturned Face," Pirandello's "War," Crane's "War is Kind," Jarrell's "Protocols," Cummings's "Next to of course God" and "I sing of Olaf," Sassoon's "Base Details," Hardy's "The Man He Killed," and Owen's "The Last Laugh" and "Dulce Et Decorum Est."

Short Films:

1. "Ares Contre Atlas," CCM Films, 7½ minutes, color, rental $10.00. Five sight gags about war illustrating black comedy at its best. Students may find it funny, but they're more likely to find it horrifying *and* cruel *and* funny in a weird sort of way. A good film to illustrate how comedy can be fused with a very deadly serious subject.

2. "Hypothese Beta," Contemporary Film, 7 minutes, color, rental $12.50. An allegory of man and his increasingly computerized life and the attendant dangers he daily faces. A computer card soon comes alive as we watch one of the punched holes dispute his place in the scheme of things. Trying to find *the* place he wants his world, he ultimately finds only destruction for everyone. A frequently amusing film with a deeply serious point about man and war.

3. "The Machine," Pyramid Films, 10 minutes, color, rental $15.00. Wolfgang Urchs's history of the development of machines, from the benevolent helper of mankind to the oppressive and war-like master of man. Frequently enigmatic but always powerful and frightening.

4. "The Magician," Mass Media Ministries, 13 minutes, black and white, rental $10.00. A group of children are attracted by a shooting gallery on a beach and then intrigued by a magician dressed in a military uniform. The magician ultimately turns the small boys into soldiers and sends them off to war and death. The film may seem a trifle heavy handed to adults, but it delivers a powerful message about war to young people, particularly about people who send others off to war while they remain safely behind.

5. "Munro," Rembrandt Films, 9 minutes, color, rental $12.50. A very funny and very pointed attack on military mentality by Jules Feiffer. Munro, a four-year-old boy, is drafted and spends his time trying to convince any number of army officers that he *is* only four. The film might lead to a good discussion on such questions as what conditions can produce a system which would be unwilling to admit an obvious goof? What aspects of our military system are satirized, and is the satire fair and/or accurate?

6. "Neighbors," Contemporary Films, 9 minutes, color, rental $12.50. A Norman McLaren classic about two neighbors who find a flower growing exactly on the line dividing their property and who war and ultimately kill each other over this possession. A film that grows in horror and violence with each viewing as it poses such questions as what are the roots of violence in man? How can beauty and love of beauty lead to anger and warfare? What are the bestial elements of man in this film and are they believably and accurately portrayed?

7. "Night and Fog," Contemporary Films, 31 minutes, black and white, rental $30.00. A nightmarish view of concentration camps as they were circa 1940-45 compared to what they appear to be today. A horrible indictment of man's willingness to hurt other men and to blind themselves to what they have done. The quietly understated and almost underdramatized soundtrack points up the horrors man is capable of. A film many will find sickening and horrifying and possibly unbelievable, but a film *everyone* ought to see at least once so they will never forget man's capability for horror and violence.

8. "Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," Contemporary Films, 27 minutes, black and white, rental $20.00. One of those rare films,

something based on literature where the film is as good as (but no better than) the original short story by Ambrose Bierce. A story with a terrific and always surprising shocking ending about the hanging of a Confederate spy during the civil war. A film which asks many basic questions about man and war and cruelty and violence and hope and man's dreams and man's frustrations.

9. "The Star Spangled Banner," Pyramid Films, 5 minutes, color, rental $10.00. A young soldier, possibly in Vietnam, steps on a landmine and dies, slowly and graphically and most bloodily in a film that convinces almost every viewer that he's seing reality, not art. Possibly controversial in some areas (though isn't it strange that any film or literature that questions the morality or point or purpose of war should be regarded as *suspect* or *un-American* or *controversial* or *dangerous*?), but students will be excited by the film's possibilities.

10. "Toys," Contemporary Films, 7 minutes, color, rental $12.50. A group of children gather at a department store window to watch war toys, and the war toys come alive (as the children freeze), illustrating every horror of war. An old and standard film which still works well with students as it continues to pose questions like what is romantic or exciting about war when it causes real blood to spill and real people to die? Why and how is the horror of war magnified and intensified by having children watch war toys play out the game of war?

The Independent Reading of Young Adults

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The following list represents a selection of reading that is currently popular with young adults. The list is the result of a detailed survey of the reading preferences of seventy-five young people in the Champaign-Urbana area.[1] The results show that young people are reading widely in three areas: 1) junior novels, 2)

[1] Carol McEwen, teacher, Champaign Central High School, and Gail Flatness, librarian, Champaign Library, assisted with the survey.

popular adult works, 3) classics. In addition, it is strikingly evident that young people are reading works that have been adapted for the media — television and movies. These books provide a teacher with sure-fire hits, even for the most disinterested high school or junior high student.

The most popular junior novels with young readers are, in order of preference:

Lisa Bright and Dark, John Neufeld, 1969
The Pigman, Paula Zindel, 1968
My Darling, My Hamburger, Zindel, 1969
I Never Loved Your Mind, Zindel, 1970
The Outsiders, S. E. Hinton, 1967
That Was Then, This Is Now, Hinton, 1971
Mr. and Mrs. Bo Jo Jones, Ann Head, 1967
Too Bad About the Haines Girl, Zoa Sherburne, 1967
The Dream Watcher, Barbara Wersba, 1968
Don't Play Dead Before You Have To, Maia Wojciechowska, 1970
Tuned Out, Wojciechowska, 1968
Sounder, William Armstrong, 1969
A Wrinkle in Time, Madeline L'Engle, 1962
Durango Street, Frank Bonham, 1965
Burma Rifles, Bonham, 1960
Hey White Girl, Susan Gregory, 1970
Drop Out, Jeannette Eyerly, 1963
The Girl Inside, Eyerly, 1968
Phoebe, Patricia Dizenzo, 1970
Hot Rod, Henry Felsen, 1950
Crash Club, Felsen, 1958
The Family Nobody Wanted, Helen Doss, 1954
The Soul Brothers and Sister Lou, Kristin Hunter, 1968
And Now Miguel, Joseph Krumgold, 1953
Fifteen, Beverly Cleary, 1956
Jane-Emily, Patricia Clapp, 1969
Ox: Story of a Kid at the Top, John Ney, 1970
The Peter Pan Bag, Lee Kingman, 1970
Jazz Country, Nat Hentoff, 1963
I'm Really Dragged but Nothing Gets Me Down, Hentoff, 1968
The Cay, Theodore Taylor, 1969
Single and Pregnant, Ruth Pierce, 1971
The Witch of Blackbird Pond, Elizabeth Speare, 1958

Many young adults prefer contemporary popular adult fiction for their leisure reading. Among the most popular adult works are:

Brian's Song, William Blinn, 1972
Jonathan Livingston Seagull, Richard Bach, 1970
Love Story, Erich Segal, 1970
I Am Third, Gayle Sayers, 1970
The Possession of Joel Delaney, Ramona Stewart, 1970
Go Ask Alice, Anonymous, 1971
Planet of the Apes, Pierre Boulle, 1963
Fail-Safe, Burdick and Wheeler, 1962
One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest, Ken Kesey, 1962
Fahrenheit 451, Ray Bradbury, 1953
Siddhartha, Hermann Hesse, 1951
Frankenstein, Mary Shelley, 1957 (paperback)
Flowers for Algernon, Daniel Keyes, 1966
The Fixer, Bernard Malamud, 1966
In Cold Blood, Truman Capote, 1965
Manchild in the Promised Land, Claude Brown, 1965
Dune, Frank Herbert, 1965
Demian, Hermann Hesse, 1965
Up the Down Staircase, Bel Kaufman, 1964
I Never Promised You a Rose Garden, Hannah Green, 1964
Run to Daylight, Vince Lombardi, 1963
The Graduate, Charles Webb, 1963
True Grit, Charles Portis, 1968
This Stranger, My Son, Louise Wilson, 1968
2001, A. C. Clarke, 1968
Childhood's End, Clark, 1953
Instant Replay, Jerry Kramer, 1968
The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test, Tom Wolfe, 1968
Rosemary's Baby, Ira Levin, 1967
The House of Tomorrow, Jean Thompson, 1967
Airport, Arthur Hailey, 1968
The Godfather, Mario Puzo, 1969
Report from Engine Company 82, Dennis Smith, 1972
Ball Four, Jim Bouton, 1970
The Other, Thomas Tryon, 1971
The Boys of Summer, Roger Kahn, 1971
Summer of '42, Herman Raucher, 1971
The Girls of Huntington House, Blossom Elfman, 1972

The Man Who Loved Cat Dancing, Marilyn Durham, 1972
Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, Dee Brown, 1971
Deliverance, James Dickey, 1970
Bless the Beasts and the Children, Glendon Swarthout, 1970
The Andromeda Strain, Michael Crichton, 1969
Slaughterhouse 5, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., 1969

Many young people are reading classical works in their leisure time. The most popular classics with the teens of today are:

Diary of a Young Girl, Anne Frank, 1952
Call of the Wild, Jack London, 1953
To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee, 1960
Light in the Forest, Conrad Richter, 1953
Shane, Jack Schaefer, 1954
Old Yeller, Fred Gipson, 1956
The Hobbit, J. R. R. Tolkien, 1938
Lord of the Rings trilogy, Tolkien
1984, George Orwell, 1949
Animal Farm, Orwell, 1946
Black Boy, Richard Wright, 1937
A Separate Peace, John Knowles, 1959
Joy in the Morning, Betty Smith, 1963
Catcher in the Rye, J. D. Salinger, 1945
Gone with the Wind, Margaret Mitchell, 1936
Wuthering Heights, Emily Bronte, 1944
Brave New World, Aldous Huxley, 1939
Stranger in a Strange Land, Robert Heinlein, 1961

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